Ridleys Turtles and Dolphins as Victims of Trawler Activities In Orissa Coast

3696. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST be pleased to state:

(a) whether Olive Ridleys turtles and dolphins have become victims of increasing activities of the trawlers in the Orissa Coast; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to declare the entire Gahirmatha coast in Orissa as a 'marine sanctuary' to protect rare marine species and make it compulsory for trawlers to have turtle excluder device?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A proposal to declare the Gahirmatha area as a marine sanctuaries is under active consideration of the Government. The issue of a notification under the Marine Products Export Development Authority Act, 1972 (MPEDA — Act) requiring all shrimp vessels in the area to use Turtle Excluder Devices (TED), is under consideration in the Ministry of Commerce.

Elephant Menace in Barak Valley, Assam

3697. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware about the mass killings of people by elephants in Barak Valley particularly in Cachar in Assam and failure of the State Government to check this menace; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take to save people of Cachar from this menace make a reserve forest in Cachar for wild elephants?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) and (b) Between 1994 and February 1997, 21 people are reported to have been killed by elephants in Barak and Cachar in Assam. The Government of Assam has taken action to check this problem by using kunki elephants and anti-depredation squads for scaring away the wild elephants and by hunting of rogue elephants as and where required. The Central Government has suggested to the Government of Assam to explore the possibilities of creation of a Sanctuary or a National Park for wild elephants in North Cachar and Barail Reserved Forests.

Ban on Setting up of Industries in Dahanu Taluka

3698. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per the Government Notification dated 20th June, 1991, no industry can be set up in Dahanu Taluka or within 25 km. from the border of Dahanu Taluka because of the thermal power plant in Dahanu;

(b) the rationale for such an order when even according to a World Bank expert, it is a model power station causing no pollution;

(c) whether Government are aware that this order is leaving this huge tribal area unindustrialised and undeveloped; and

(d) whether Government are also aware that this order is being implemented only in the Maharashtra part of the above area and not in the Gujarat and Dadra and Nagar Haveli part of it?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) and (b) Considering the need for protecting the ecologically sensitive Dahanu Taluka and to ensure that developmental activities are consistent with principles of environmental protection and conservation, a Notification was issued by the Central Government in June, 1991 to regulate setting up of industries in the region.